

The Best of the Best: Part 1 of 3

by CoLd BlooDed1

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Summary: A comedy involving the equivalent of the UNSC - that being the UNSK, a worthless corporation derived from the very presence of ONI and UNSC combined. However, Alpha Squad - the best of the best - are sent off on a top-priority mission.

The Best of the Best: Part 1 of 3

It was a fine winters evening, the black clouds were scattered, tiny flakes of snow drifted down slowly and landed on the ground, and the air was amazingly humid; courtesy to the air-conditioning built into the Forerunner structure that Alpha Squad was walking around inâ€”it was a piece of crap as you could probably guess. The air-conditioning, surprisingly, was just as bad.

Alpha Squad, however, was considered the best of the best in the UNSK; they had been trained to perfectionâ€”well, almostâ€”and were the toughest in the Corps. This, however, wasn't saying much.

"Why do Elites stand at twelve-feet? Isn't that kinda big for one of them... uh, Covies?" stupidly asked Joseph Leech, he wasn't the brightest on the squad, but he stood behind them allâ€”that's what counted.

After a momentary silence, one of the othersâ€”Daniel Burkâ€”responded. "Those are Hunters, you dumbass, and it doesn't matter, they're of a different species, we just kill 'em." He was one of the smartest, but there was only one thing that defective about himâ€”Burk didn't have the guts to fire a weapon (even at a wall, which had proved disastrous at Boot, which he had just managed to pass, by the way), or have the wit to outsmart the enemy. He'd scream and squirm at the sight of blood (which had also proved disastrous at Boot, a Warthog had run over a stray ferret in front of Burks' cabin), then pass out. Stillâ€”he was the best of the best... again, not saying much.

They all moved down the narrow hallway, the lights flickering

mournfully overhead. A dull klaxon echoed in the background, something that usually happened every day, every hour, every minute—it was faulty, and the personnel in the UNSK couldn't do jack shit to stop it, although they _were_ the best of the best...

"Okay, we're needed at the briefing room." said Sergeant Andrews, the CO of the squad, "Let's go."

Scottie Downsman snickered from behind the Sarge.

"What is it, Private?" Andrews said lamely without bothering to turn around.

"You said '_briefing_ _room_!'" this caused Downsman to burst into laughter.

_He's insane, _Andrews thought, _he's simply insane._

"No I'm not." said the Private, the Sergeant wheeled around and glared at Scottie, who stared above at nothing.

"How do you know I was—"

"You are," Downsman said into the air, his eyes were glazed over, "you stupid pixies."

Oh, he's insane alright. I think he's been taking Leech's prescription drugs.

"Scottie, quiet down."

"Sir!" the Private replied, he snapped a crispy salute and walked away.

"Uh, I'm not sure we're going to need him." Corporal Insurance said.

"Right, Insurance; you've always been on the money."

Everyone burst into sudden laughter, and this caused the Sarge to reminisce.

He had been the leader of Alpha Squad before he had even realized it. The training he had done back in Boot with the other members had been exceptional; truly the best five days of his life.

They had done weapon shooting, obstacle courses, gift wrapping, and house building... the works, everything a Marine had to do when sitting at home, watching T.V and getting a laugh out of 'Everyone Hates Mort', God, how the Sarge loved that show. Any-who, the UNSK had provided all the necessary programs directed for their Marines, and they had been trained thoroughly.

Corporal Insurance had been his favorite trainee, mostly because he got to poke fun at his last name; everyone else was a nobody to him—except PFC Joseph Leech, he had become known due to his accident-prone-ness and stupid-ness. There had been the cafeteria incident, where all the waffles had been poisoned because Leech had forgotten how to make them—he had stuck them in the

radiation-emitting boiler because he couldn't fine the radiation-emitting microwave. There was also The Accident, where nobody wanted to visit the Men's lavatory... it is self-explanatory"but again, Leech's fault. _How had he managed to drink that much washer fluid? _the inner voice still asked to this very day.

He didn't know.

He also didn't know how the blue washer fluid hadn't poisoned him"but The Accident had been the result. A big blue, messy result which had made all the janitors millionaires, how the UNSK (which was a very poor corporation) paid for the cleanup Andrews didn't know either.

Anyways, back to reminiscing.

All the others had been successes, in retrospection from the UNSK high-ranking personnel, the... Technicians. Andrews shuddered at the thought of them. Wait, did he think that all of them had been successes? He was wrong, let me correct.

All were successes except Private Scottie Downsman, the soldier who had just walked away"again, self-explanatory (talking to the pixies? Right, extremely sane, that one). He hadn't caused as many accidents as the infamous Joe "Washer Fluid Drinker" Leech, but he was still pretty damn mad"and that, unlike anything else in the UNSK, was saying something.

The elevator at the end of the hall opened suddenly, expressing its arriving with a mediocre _ping-pong!_ The Sarge stopped and waited for a pair of Marines inside the lift to get out"they didn't.

"Do you mind if we come in? Or are you just going to stand there?"

"We don't know, sir, we have a lot of spare time."

"I see." Andrews replied, "So"can my squad come in?"

"Sure" the closest soldier said, and then the second Marine cut him off.

"No, you can't, not enough room."

"Yes there is!" blurted out Burk, "The area inside the square elevator is three meters in diameter!"

Everyone glared at him, the Privates' eyes shifted, and then he responded.

"Oh, right, sorry"three meters in _circumference_."

Everybody smiled and turned to look back at the second Marine.

"What's your name, son?" asked Andrews toughly, he edged closer to the soldier and they stared eye to eye. "I'm going to report you for not letting us into the elevator."

"It's Second Marine," he replied, almost amiably, "and if you don't report me, I'll let you in."

"Okay, fineâ€" and the members of Alpha Squad attempted to step in.

"Suckers!" Second Marine yelled, he pressed a button repeatedly that was on the wall.

The elevator doors didn't close, leaving Second Marine and his embarrassed friend inside, but the trooper kept pushing at the unseen button, almost frantically. Then he stopped, looked at the frowning Sergeant, and crossed his arms.

"So, how's your wife doing?"

"Great," Andrews replied sociably, "thanks for asking."

"No problem, but hey; I gotta get going, see ya around."

"You too, Second."

The door shut on him, leaving nothing but metal for the squad to stare atâ€"it was truly disappointing.

Then the Sergeant realized he had just let that man get away with not letting his squad on.

"That sonofawhore! Wait 'til I get a hold of the General!" he began, practically in rage, "That bastard is going to giveâ€"

"Sir, I suggest we use one of the other tenâ€"operational, I might addâ€"lifts, they're all open." interjected Burk.

"Ah, right."

They walked off into the next elevator.

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"Sir, I believe that is the best course of action, me and my squad will be heading out in less than an hour."

There was a silence in the briefing room, and the General just looked at him blankly.

"Sergeant," he said, "you just came in here and sat down, I haven't said anything."

"Sure you have."

"I am General Vananabanana, and I am to be taken _seriously!"

—

"Sorry, sir, my mistake. It won't happen again; but please, do tell us what you were going to say."

General Vananabanana was a fairly sensible man, with a great sense of

responsibility and principlesâ€”but sometimes; the guy could be an ass, or even better, an old guy trying to act young.

"Word." Vananabanana said, he curled his hand into a fist, brought it down on his chest, choked, then continued to bring his decrepit old monkey-fingers together to make a "peace" sign, everyone stayed silent. "Peace on dat, bro."

"Please, General, we need to get to business." one of Vananabanana's associates said from behind a curtain with a Scottish accent, "We're recording this meeting to make sure Alpha Squad is still fit... if they aren't, they'll all be hung in front of the Queen while she eats tea and biscuits."

"Ahem." one of the other associates coughed, making a slitting gesture with his two fingers across his neck.

"Oh, right, forget everything I said," the first accented speaker said, looking slightly embarrassed. "But Vananabanana, we need to get started."

"I feel you, dawgâ€”"

"General!"

"Sorry." he apologized quickly, then he set his hands down on the shiny blue surface of the table that Andrew's squad was seated at. "Alright, let's get to what I wanted to say... we're sending you on an operation."

"I figured!" shouted Leech, almost sounding smart, "I guessed that and I'm right! We're going on a mission, and I was _right!_"

"Noâ€”you're going on an operation, you idiot, big difference." snapped the General, Leech stared at him for a second and then frowned.

"Oh." the dimwitted Private said sullenly, "I never would've guessed."

Vananabanana kept on talking like Leech had never said anything at all: "You're traveling to the dug-in structure nearby, roughly around twenty kilometers east of here. We just need you to eliminate the Covenant forces around there, but since we figured we don't want to waste half the already-dying men in the UNSK, we decided to send you guys. You ARE the best of the best, after all."

The Sergeant winced at this remark.

"Anyways, I'm here to show you a small slideshow, courtesy of UNSK Slideshow Incorporated," then he quoted: "The only goddamn slideshow company in the _Universe!_"

It was funny, actually, because that was truly what the quote was; word by word. The General began the presentation with an old 21st century projector, beginning it with muffled curses rhyming with "Bucking Niece of Mitt" and "Fuckin' UNSK can't afford a fuckin' up-to-date projector"â€”oh, wait, forget that last one.

Vananabanana held up a device, pressed on it, and the vacant blue screen at the end of the room flashed a picture, one after another after another.

"This is the compound, this is where you'll enter, this is the main area where the sentries patrol. This is a cheetah, this is a mongoose... and this is my wife when we went to Hawaii"man, compared to then, she's really let herself go."

"She's still alive?"

"What's that supposed to mean?"

"I think you know."

The General pondered for a moment, then looked back at the Marine (the Sarge had forgotten his name, so let's call him, Thomas Jefferson) with a proud look on his face. "Oh! You mean is she still _alive?" _he winked at Jefferson and said: "Nah, she's kind of a deadbeat, doesn't move much, it's like making love to a frickin' marshmallow."

All of Alpha Squad groaned.

"Yeah, and the morticians told me I could see her everyday at the morgue. Right!" Vananabanana scoffed, everyone winced and tried to block the image out of their minds.

"So," Buck said with an acrid expression, "she's dead."

"More or less, but I can do a helluva ventriloquism act with her, she's lost a lot of weight over the last few months. Well, enough about my personal life, how about yours, knockin' boots with any hotties?"

Buck stared at him.

"Well, we better be hittin' the ol' dusty trail..." the Sergeant began, stretching his arms. He rose from his seat, "Say, when do we get a Pelican ride to the location?"

"Oh, shit!" the General glanced at the first associate; then the other. He glanced quickly at the watch he had drawn on his paper-white skin and said, "You have five minutes to get suited up and leave."

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"Pile out Marines!" barked Andrews, "Go, go, go!"

There was silence, no one was moving.

"Uh, Sarge?"

"What is it, Burk?"

"We haven't even left yet, we missed the flight, and we're walking."

"Ah, damn," the Sergeant replied, "must've slipped my mind."

* * *

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After much struggling to get over the hills and far away, the Sergeant and the others figured out that the information given by the General was false, the structure wasn't dug in, it was actually the opposite. The structure was located at the top of an overhang, looming overhead, casting a humongous shadow over the mountainside that Alpha Squad now occupied. It was snowing even more heavily than down below, which made sense, but according to Private Leech... well, nothing, actually, Leech was just an idiot. He was almost (keyword is almost) as smart as a monkey, he had been taking tests given to the mentally retarded, butâ€"he was getting there.

"Come on, we need to get inside." Andrews waved forward with his left hand and ran forward, not bothering to see if anyone following himâ€"even though he knew they weren't. "There are no patrols, we need to hurry!"

"...why? They're just going to pop out and scare us..." the long, drawling complaint was none other than from Downsman (who they had found hiding in the furnace. "It's nice and toasty." he had said before they doused the flames out that had ignited in his hair).

"Just come on!"

"No, actually, Scottie made a point." responded one of the others, his name was... Shnoodle? No. Jarsnick? Nah. Pickadilee-Rhyoming? 'Course not.

Oh, right, it was Jerry, but Andrews had been close.

"Is that so?"

"Oh, almost definitely, sir."

"Are you questioning my authority?"

"'Course not, Sarge."

"Would you do anything for me?"

"You bet, sir! You can test my loyalty and courage anytime!"

"Alright..." Andrews looked around, thinking of something he could do for him, something that would benefit the rest of the squad; it had to be constructive. "Go jump off that cliff for me."

"Yes, sir!"

The Marine went at full sprint across the snow-trodden ground with bare-feetâ€"something that the Sergeant just realizedâ€"went into a dive-like motion once he jumped off the massive overhang.

_"...I have no regretsssssss...!" _the Marines' voice rang out; what had his name been? The Sergeant knew this one, but decided it didn't matter. He had to move on.

"Alright, troops, if any of you want to prove your loyalty and courage, go jump off the cliff."

All of Alpha Squad immediately started to run, but the Sarge held up his hand and yelled at them, then told him he was merely joking. Then he told them that the only way to prove themselves was to carry out the missionâ€"sorry, operation.

They moved slowly towards the structure, with the Sergeant not thinking about what was going to happen... but what the General had said about doing his wife who he believed wasn't dead, but obviously was.

He shuddered, and didn't know whether it was the cold, crisp air or the visual image.

End
file.